

of a Strategic plan for the Management of the GBR for the next 25 years. Hopefully, through its close working relationships with the users of the Park, signs of deterioration or changes in the marine communities will quickly filter back to the Authority in time for action to be taken. The reef, as demonstrated by its World Heritage status, should be protected and managed for time immemorial.

ACRS supports the context and recommendations of the Whitehouse report on GBRMPA and recognizes that steps have been taken to implement a number of the recommendations and to review direction and policy in light of the review. The new Chairman Dr Ian McPhail is taking on a series of new challenges for the Authority and has a track record for achievement in the community interests.

Finally the Society believes that Whitehouse's review addressed well the terms of reference and enforces the widely held belief that the Authority is fulfilling its responsibility to the management and protection of the Great Barrier Reef.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCES

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- Resource Assessment Commission, Coastal Zone Inquiry, 1993, Canberra.

A review of the review

To: Pat Hutchings and Dan Lunney

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your review of the Whitehouse review of GBRMPA.

The report by John Whitehouse on the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the review of that report by Dr Pat Hutchings are in my opinion very fair and competent documents. I have three comments which address both reports.

I believe that Australia needs a more efficient co-ordinating system for managing its coastal waters than presently exists. By "coastal waters", I mean all the waters within the jurisdiction of the state, territory or federal governments. My recommendation is that an Australian Coastal Waters Authority (ACWA) should be established, to be chaired by the Chair of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), with a representative of each state and territory government. This Authority should have the function of co-ordinating the investigation, planning, management and monitoring of our coastal waters, with the explicit mandate of ensuring that use of those waters is ecologically sustainable. The ACWA should have a small secretariat and should rely to the maximum extent practicable on the expertise within

existing government agencies for performing its technical and administrative functions.

Both Mr Whitehouse and Dr Hutchings support increased attention to the involvement of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in the management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP). The GBRMPA has had such a policy for many years, but has never had the human resources to apply the policy to its satisfaction. It should be recognized that the meaningful involvement of these communities in complex, technical issues, using analytical and decision making processes that have not traditionally been used by them, requires special, additional resources provided explicitly and exclusively for that purpose.

Finally, it might be noted that, in addition to the areas noted in Dr Hutchings' report as having adopted variants of the GBRMP model, the USA (in Florida and California) and Western Australia have acted similarly.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these two reports.

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